

FRANCISCA REINA

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Francisca Reina

Dedicated to
The City of Saint Francis



¶ *FRANCISCA REINA* is published under the auspices
of the Pacific Coast Women's Press Association for
the benefit of its honored member, Miss Ina Coolbrith

Francisca Reina

BY

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Author of "A California Pilgrimage among the Old Missions"

*"La Parra Grande, a Legend of the Santa
Barbara Grape Vine"*

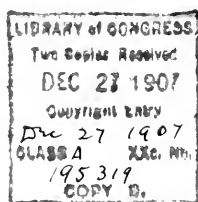
BOSTON: RICHARD G. BADGER

The Gorham Press

1908

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Art Photographs by Frances Reid McCulloch

31

The Gorham Press, Boston, U. S. A.

Contents

| | PAGE |
|------------------------------------|------|
| Francisca Reina | 7 |
| Francisca Dolorosa | 11 |
| Francisca Madre | 15 |
| Let Us Forget | 19 |
| Francisca's Thanksgiving | 21 |
| How We Went out | 24 |
| Francisca Diligente | 32 |
| The Simple Life | |
| <i>On Sidewalks</i> | 34 |
| <i>In Tents</i> | 38 |
| <i>In Clubs</i> | 38 |
| The Reason Why | 42 |
| Francisca Gloriosa | 44 |



Francisca Reina

FRANCISCA REINA

A stricken queen, but still a queen of queens,
She sat upon the sloping of her hills
Where wreck and fire had danced the dance of death.

Her forehead bowed upon her knees she sat.
An instant stunned by her transcendant woe.
The smoke still burnt her eyelids, and her throat
Quivered with pungent acids of the flame.



*"Where wreck and fire had
danced the dance of death"*

The acrid vapors of the steaming muck
Were in her nostrils and her slackened breath
Was spent through ashes on her bleeding lips.

A while all paralyzed, then slow her head
Upraised. Her eyes were dim. She saw through mists
The vista of her hills all gray and still.
When would they laugh again? Ten thousand homes
Had burnt their hearthstones into monuments
For her as dead.



"The vista of her hills . . . when would they laugh again"

That cup unveiled she saw
Which fate has ready for the desolate.

The black wine of despair each hour new pressed
From envy of the nether gods. This cup,
Scorned lightly in her pride, he thrust at her
With coward jeers: "Drink, drink, thou boastful dame.
Dost mock it now? There's nothing more for thee."
Once glance! The vision came! Her spirit's light
Broke forth in aureole about her head —
Glory immortal of a risen soul.

Upright she stood. Hot cinders burnt her feet —
She knew it not. With fingers tense, the cup
She seized and, like one born to her own house,
That black wine of despair, she tossed aloft
Upon the embers and the blistering rocks.

“’Tis not for me, a queen, this dastard draught,
For lo! They come — my children from the sea
Of fire — each man a king. Their garments smoke.
Their brows deep seamed but bright with hope. Their eyes
Are brave, their faces set to conquer death.
My sons! my sons!” With touch of its old joy
Her voice rang out among the blackened tombs.
“Come near, ye bruised ones. Unflinching hearts,
Together make we sacrificial vows
With orisons unto the rising sun.”



“Ten thousand homes had burnt their hearthstones into monuments for her as dead”



Francisca Dolorosa

FRANCISCA DOLOROSA

Fore-doomed the horror of the age to bear,
By Fate hand-gripped, we went forth from our homes.
From mornings to the ending days we fared,
And from three midnights to their dawns again
From place to place; the while, a demon crazed.
Destruction followed in a pact with Death.
And yet a song was on our lips. We smiled
Into each other's eyes in comradeship.
The great heart of humanity awoke.
With throbs which stilled the consciousness of SELF.

And we went forth to night that was as day,
To day that was as night, for time was not.
The parrot clinging to his master's sleeve
Forgot his chattering. The songless birds
Shivered upon the perch. Dumb creature's eyes
Were pleading unto us. Go forth? Whither?
To pavements choked with people dazed by shock,
Smoke-strangled, bent beneath their burdened backs,
Half dumb and goblin-like in flame-lit smoke;
Streets harsh with scrapings of a hasty flight,
Ashriek with dragging things that blocked our feet.
The mountains called and from the docks the cry,
"This way for life! To save your life, this way."
For hours, the sea, far out, had roared its pain.

But now, the bay, unmindful of the wounds
Of Mother Earth, said, "Come, I know a shore
Of rest:" and thousands followed it to peace,
On waves resplendent in a world of fire,—
The light from an Immortal's flaming nest.

We smelled the smoke of things revered. Our mouths
Were bitter with the char of household gods.
We trod the cinders from the city's heart,
Our city, loved as hearthstones are. Whither?
The parks! A woman's cry. There stood strong men
Shoulder to shoulder, their broad backs a wall
Around one stricken ere her time, her bed
The street. Aye, aye, men's backs a hasty wall
To guard that moment holy, from the crowd.
Instinct of manhood unto motherhood;
O God! The glory and the pain of it!
The gentleness of those rough hands which bore
To sheltering that prostrate form! O face
Newborn, adust with ashes of its home!

Whither ? Unto the hills still green with spring ?
 The slender fingers of a jewelled dame
 Spread out her fluffy down in silken sheath,
 Beneath the forehead of a negro child.
 Her store of dainties hasty seized, she brake
 As bread unto God's homeless multitude;
 And seemed it to increase, as did the loaves
 Of Him who fed the crowds in Galilee.

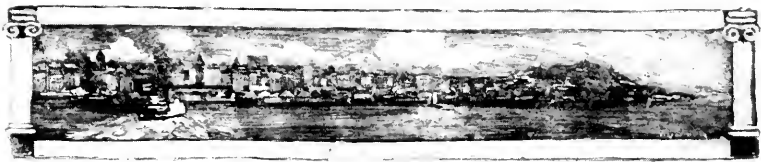
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While tongues of dogs unknown licked up the crumbs
 From off our hands in brotherhood of woe.

The auto of the millionaire became
 A thing of life, the while the man's own hands
 Were black with gathering waifs and strays. This car
 Was God's swift messenger unto the maimed.
 It flew filled with sweet faces of the nuns
 To minister beside the narrow cot;
 With the red crosses of the brotherhood
 Aglow, it flew unto the service field
 Of skill and love; then black with priestly robes
 Which held within the sacred vest, the sealed
Vaticum to cheer the way to death.
 Piled with the fallen and the halt it flew;
 Then comfort-nigh for hungry, shivering forms.
 This pleasure thing built for the rich man's toy!
 And thus unto the sand dunes and the tides
 We fled, alone or in some brother's care;
 And that red glare beat on us yet for days
 Till hearts grew strong with giving others cheer.

No strangers then! All races were akin
 By God's one fatherhood to all. A man
 Was but a man unto a man. Enough!
 One brand of pain was on us all. I knew
 My sister by the grime upon her hands.
 My mother! Was not she that babbling one
 Who tottered from the doorway of her shack
 With smoking garments prone upon my feet ?
 Not mine ? Those children dragging at my skirts ?
 My brother from the hill of palaces,
 His softened features gray with cinder dust
 Of mansions, now forgetting his own loss,
 Tender as to the firstborn of his house,—
 He wraps within his coat of sable warmth
 The sleeping child he found upon the street.
 The holy joy of such a fellowship!
 The angels must have wept and worshipped God.

Thou city of our hearts! With that first rage
Of passion primitive we loved, we loved,
Yet helpless saw thee struggle, gasp and fall.
What meant the song upon our lips? The uplift
Of shock? The nervous power of pain supreme?
Nay, nay! The angel hands were blinding us,
Lest knowing we go mad before the chrism
Of hope, their fingers touched upon our eyes.
The solemn joy of newborn faith in life,
And faith born of catastrophe is strength.
Extremity like thine revealed to us
That thou wert of God's plan unto the world
To civilize. We saw that thou must rise
In evolution of His purposes
From thy baptism of fire to higher life.
Thus meant the song unconscious on our lips;
A Resurrexit in a Requiem Chant.





"But in Faic's challenge fine's its best"

FRANCISCA MADRE

New Year, 1907

What cheer, Francisco Madre, what of cheer
For this, the world's expectant year?
Struggles uncanny hast thou now
While still upon thy cheek the tear.
The laborer's sweat is on thy brow;
Thy hands have changed the timbrels for the spade;
Thy feet that danced go firm and unafraid.
With front of light thou farest to and fro
Among a city full
Of wrecks, each stone a shrine to memory dear,





“Travail of tasks gigantic must o’erfill thy soul”

When smites all ruthlessly upon thy face
 The crime of blood, while from thy noble place
 Greed’s hookèd fingers reach to thy disgrace.
 With such unnatural foe
 Thy courage is more pitiful
 Than thy first woe.

O life that riots in the Western breast!
 Despair it knows not, no, nor rest,
 But in Fate’s challenge finds its best.
 Through all the pulses of thy throbbing mart,
 It thrills thee, city of the bleeding heart;
 Thrills thee with promise of the coming year.

Francisca of our love, what cheer?
 On every side we hear
 The hammer and the chisel ply,
 And creaking of the wains that thrust us by.
 The carven stone had been thy creed,
 But to thy children’s sudden need
 Thou offerest with averted eye
 A sheath of iron and wood;

They answer through a stifled cry,
 "Yea, mother, this is good!"
 And pledge thee for a glad New Year.

Francisca, watcher of the night, what cheer?
 By day, thou paintest in the future's glow,
 The fair dream city which the world shall know.
 But when thou gazest through the chill
 Of night from hill to blackened hill,
 Travail of tasks gigantic, must o'erfill
 Thy soul. 'Tis then thou shudderest with the pain
 Of Memory and Hope in mortal strain.
 But Hope, the strong twin-sister of the Dawn,
 Forever young, smiles with each rising sun
 Upon the yet wreck-jaggèd slopes, and lo!
 The broken hearthstones flush in rosy glow,
 Above new homes that nestle at thy feet,
 Like the swift-lighted gulls of gray. And thou,
 Dear mother, liftest thy rejoicing brow,
 As the fleet-footed moments run,
 Foreshadowed splendors of the year to greet.

Thou hast rich welcome for the hovering Year
 That poises on thy threshold half in fear.
 There's a cheer, Francisca Madre, THERE IS CHEER.



"'Tis . . . Memory and Hope in mortal strain"



Maynard Dixon.
San Francisco - 06.

*"Thou hast rich welcome for the hovering Year
That poises on thy threshold half in fear.
There's a cheer, Francisca Madre, there is cheer."*



Church of the Advent

LET US FORGET

The horror which surpassed all telling;
 The memories still welling, welling,
 — Exhaustless fountain of our pain —
 Let us forget.

The nights that made us gray ere mornings,
 The desolation of those dawns,
 Whose like, no suns of fire-red stain
 Had seen before nor may again,
 Let us forget.

The losses which have made us brothers;
 The sufferings, our own and others,
 E'en wrecking of a life's long toil,
 Let us forget.

Lest we grow hard and unforgiving,
 Lest we lose that great joy of living —
 The might to wrest from out the soil
 The wealth that is our rightful spoil,
 Let us forget.

LET US FORGET

Lest we get low and weary-hearted
Thinking of old and new thus parted
—A gulf whose bridge is hope alone —

Let us forget.

Let us look onward to the morrows;

As monuments o'er buried sorrows

Piling the best the world has known
Of iron strength and carven stone,

Let us forget;

Lord God! Help us forget.



Old Mission Dolores



"With a purpose as given our fathers who builded good cities and true"

FRANCISCA'S THANKSGIVING

When the hordes of barbarian Persians
 Laid the beauty of Athens in waste,
 With her sons came their women and children
 Making vows to the gods, and in haste
 Bearing stones for the walls and the turrets,
 Till a city arose at whose shrine
 The centuries kneeled in unloading
 Their argosies' purple and wine
 Then Æschylus, reading his vision,
 Sang the song of the city's new morn;
 Myron felt for the soul of the marble
 Which in Phidias later was born.
 By a power more dread than an army
 Destruction has come to our gates,
 And it struck with a terror and blindness
 Which tossed us like toys of the Fates.

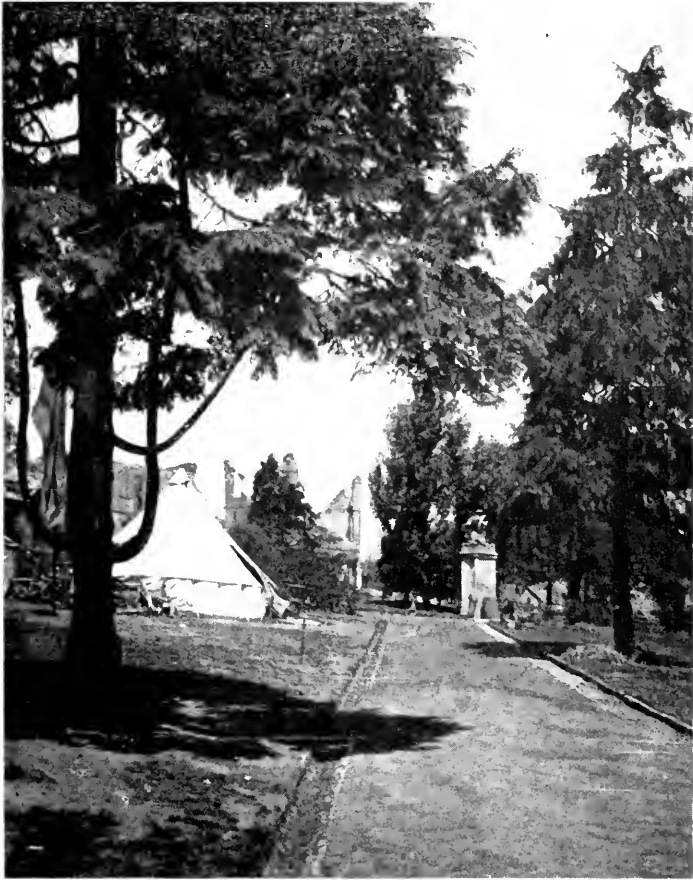


Pioneer Monument

But give thanks that man's greatest is left us,
 The strength and the courage to do,
 A purpose as grim as our fathers'
 Who builded good cities and true.
 Give thanks for the grain's golden harvest,
 Those placers of wind-rippled fields;
 For the opened storehouse of the mountains
 Where each year its new treasure up-yields.
 True children of Argonauts are we
 And our struggles to theirs are akin;
 Though the trials be hosts like the Persians
 An Athenian valor shall win.
 Then Art shall arise from the ashes
 An immortal unhurt by her scars;

And a voice shall be heard in the ruins
With a song that shall quicken the stars.
As with vows, the builders of Athens
Made a shrine of each wall they upraised,
So may we make our city a temple
To the God whom our fathers praised.

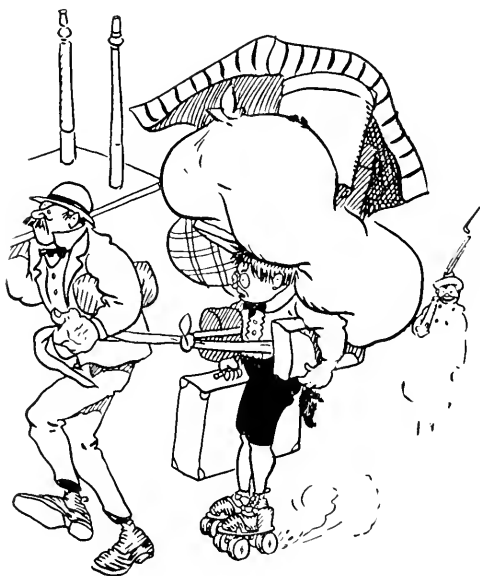
Then spread we the feast of Thanksgiving
With a hymn for the days of old;
Cheers shall ring for the arduous Present
And the triumphs the Future shall hold.



Monument of Robert Louis Stevenson in Portsmouth Square

HOW WE WENT OUT

She wore five skirts, he wore two hats,
He led the dog, she carried cats;
A blanket, soldierwise, about
Each waist was coiled, they both were stout.
He had a bundle on his back
And dragged a trunk along the track.
She bore a hat box and a grip;
The squirming kittens made her trip,
Those catlings yowled beneath her weight;
He picked her up and swore at Fate.
In baleful glare of reddish light,
They knew not were it day or night —
They plodded towards the Golden Gate.
Then sat upon their trunk to wait.
Was this the end or should they go
Still farther to the “Westward Ho!”



They found a waif fast strapped on skates
Crying by the Presidio gates;
He'd lost his pa and on his head,
Top-heavy, bore the family bed.
She cheered him with a mother squeeze,
And fed him of the bread and cheese
With other pets around their knees.

The flames had reached a hotel dome!
 A lady rich in mines of Nome
 Rushed down the stairs to find the street,
 Rolling her packs before her feet.
 Her latest hat she had assumed
 To save its owlet, newly plumed.
 A skirt above her *robe de nuit*
 Was all the dress that one could see;
 Her Paris gowns of great expense
 Were not just then in evidence
 Save by a cuff or bit of lace
 Exuding from a pillow case.
 She dragged her bundles in this plight,
 Half consciously she felt them light;
 One backward glance! A wretched wrack
 Of nameless garments marked her track.
 A rubber bag — the long-necked kind,
 Was crawling like a worm behind.
 A passer cried — or was it craze? —
 "Madam, your hat is all ablaze."
 She dashed it down upon the pave,
 That bird must go her life to save.
 One back despairing look she cast,
 The sight will haunt her to the last;
 That owl's glass eyes in vengeful ire
 Glared at her from a wreath of fire.

A forty-niner, camped in town,
 Had watched the city burning down;
 The dignity of one tiled hat
 He'd reached through suffering, and that
 To save, he'd make a sacrifice,
 And so he wore it; awful price!



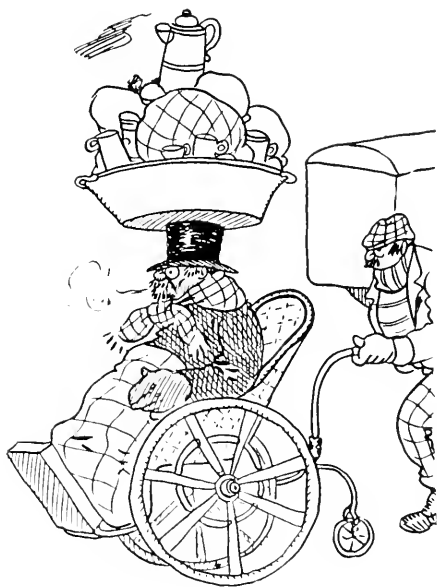
An outgrown baby cart he found,
 And started prospecting new ground,
 Unconsciously he took the word
 Of the old slogan, long unheard
 Since he went broke upon the Trust;
 "Pardner, we'll make Twin Peaks or bust."

A house by hotel-swelldom kept.
 Italian virtuosos slept
 Far up and dreamed of Italy.
 Vendettas of dear Sicily,
 Vesuvius and her latest tricks;
 When suddenly the rattling bricks
 Made nightmare of the passing dream;
 Vesuvius, still the latest theme,
 Came first to mind, as down the stair
 They rushed upon the facing square;
 Cried one with vast dramatic air,
 Arms waving wildly in despair,
 "O thou, Vesuvius, my own!
 A shake like this thou ne'er hast known!
 Why did I leave my mountain thus?
 Heart of my heart, Vesuvius!
 Oh, give me my Vesuvius!"
 This tragic artist wore the while
 Pajamas of the latest style.
 What man, think you, it was would do so?
 His name? The rhyme demands Caruso?

In garments anything but fresh,
 She rolled in amplitude of flesh
 From one to other of her brood,
 Asweat with love and packing food.
 "Here, Jakey, come and lif dis pile;
 Don't go yourself away a mile,
 Stay wid your pa and help to pull
 Dat trunk, for it is plenty full.

Here, Bruder Abe, you're high and strong
 To push your gran'pa's chair along.
 Now go him slow or you make wrong.
 Vere's Zolomons? Vot for you vait?
 I tells you keep dat puggy straight.
 Der papy! She is pack inside;
 Now give your little sister ride.
 Don't look aroun', but mind your feet.
 How much times must I tole you so?
 You mischief poy, now dare she go!
 You spills mine papy in der street!"

"O God of Israel!" groaned the sire,
 "Found Father Abram once a fire?
 Had Yacob in der vilderniss
 Pulled ever such a load like this?"



From puffy pores the sweat oozed out,
For he was greasy, short, and stout.

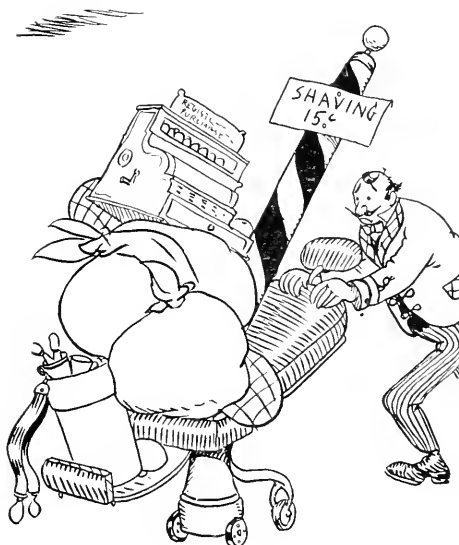
“You look just like those pack mules, Jim,
When we came down from Washbowl Rim;”
The grips were strapped all over him.
“All right, my girl, you can’t say much
About appearances and such;
Give me another pack before
I wedge you through the big front door.
You are so trussed up with these things
You cannot spread your angel wings,
But you’re an angel and dead game;
Let’s hit the trail in search of fame.”
“O! hush, you boy, it is a crime
To joke at such an awful time.
Our home! How can we let it go!
Here Eddy died — O Jim, you know —”
“Don’t cry, old girl; if I break up
I might collapse that painted cup.
The mines at Washbowl still are rich;
Oh, luck, we’ll get the diamond hitch.”
Whence but from guardian angel’s power
Come cheer and courage in such hour?



Guiseppe swore this was not Rome;
 He sweat, he wept, and thought of home
 On Tiber's bank, but quite forgot
 That sometimes there the meals were not
 As frequent as the classic shade.
 Nor was the bundle he had made
 At leaving Rome too great to bear.
 Of goods to-day, if he'd been there
 How easy he'd have dragged his share.

He met the barber, old François;
 They lauded, in their two patois,
 The beauties of the old countrie,
 But chose to burn and still be free.

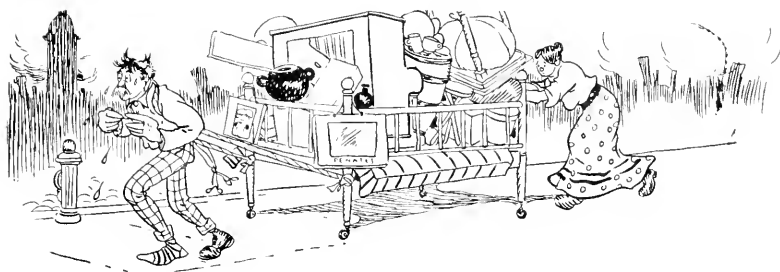
"Now, Biddy, give yourself a hunch
 And get the childer in a bunch,
 The soldier orthers us to go."
 Now Biddies argue well, you know,
 And Paddy had a bad half hour
 Explaining military power;



And not until appeared once more
 A gun which seemed to fill the door,
 Its dreaded threat would she obey;
 "O Pat, begorra is the day
 I left ould Ireland for you,
 As granny said, i' faith 'tis throe."

When she begun, it was a whirl,
 She loaded down each boy and girl;
 Hitched up to go-carts full of duds,
 They pulled and frisked like Shetland studs.

She harnessed Pat to homemade fills
 And pushed behind to cross the hills.
 "And is't to lave the dare ould place!"
 She cried. "O Mary, full of grace!
 Mother o' God, look down the day!"





Pat, mind the childer,"— and away
 Within the church's toppling door
 One precious moment on the floor
 She told her beads with *Aves* o'er.
 That church, fire-doomed! Her prayer its last!
 O faith God-blest for ages past!

An auto piled with silken puffs
 And glittering Oriental stuffs
 Drove down upon the sand, wave-damp,
 Seeking in haste a midnight camp.

A group of Chinamen was near
 Each man an Oriental seer,
 Calm in his fatalistic cheer.
 With rice-bag parcels banked around,
 They stood or squatted on the ground.
 Quick spoke the leader of the crew,
 "My boys! you like they helpee you?"
 "Thanks, John, these ladies are so cold;"
 The stranger said, and offered gold;
 "Me helpee you, no likee pay;
 Me alle same white man to-day."
 Then with their deft, long-fingered hands,
 They improvised upon the sands
 A tent of Persian prayer-cloths made
 With priceless rugs for carpet laid;
 A couch of fluffy pillows piled,
 Those heads to doubtful rest beguiled.

When morning dawned, red-flushed but chill,
Pulses were slow and voices still;
Within the tent all cheer had died;
A squeaky treble piped outside,
"Madam, she likee bowl of rice ?
I think she find him belly nice."
Fluffy and white each kernel stood,
A thing alone, a steaming food,
Cooked by this wrinkled Chinaman,
Cooked as Celestials only can.
The native dames were unsurprised,
The Eastern ladies recognized
A yellow angel, but disguised.



"That church, fire-doomed ! Her prayer its last"



FRANCISCA DILIGENTE

May to August, 1906

No more "Indifferent to Fate
She sits beside the Golden Gate;"
But casts about with watchful eyes
If Diligence perchance supplies;
Some wandering relief supplies;
We thought we had no public squares
But she has found them everywhere;
They showed up quick with army tents
And shacks and cooking implements;
While from a bread line improvised
Good things she duly authorized,
With life no longer simplified
To coffee and a bacon side.
She mothers well these refuge camps;
And watches all the flickering lamps.
Patrols guard them till morning breaks,
These homeless folk from fire and quakes.

South Market Street in peace abides
Indefinite upon the sides
Of hilly parks whose sacred green
Had never such despoiling seen.
In vain the neighbors may protest
That this continuance is no jest,
For mighty ones serenely say
"These camper folk have come to stay;"
While vicious wags, "Ah, ha! The boats
Political are steered by votes!"
She gives them tent-schools every day;
The bands for them on Sunday play;
Sermons and hymns, each to his mind,
Assorted here the pious find.

A table d'hôte she has essayed
Beneath the park trees' ready shade;
Till those who toil for bread and cheese
Have sometimes envied refugees.
Who would attack a pile of brick
When soup was waiting hot and thick?
Who likes the mortar-laden breeze
While seats are empty under trees?
And yet, her naughty children cried:
"O Ma, such eggs! They ain't half fried."
Hear that, ye hapless ones who pay
And humbly take what comes your way.
Ingratitude was such surprise
That poor Francisca wiped her eyes,
And thought of her reduced supplies;
Not being learned in landlord lore
Of showing grumblers to the door.

Far from indifferent, of late
She oftentimes consults with Fate
In watchings round the Golden Gate.





"These were a honeymooning pair and found first housekeeping no joke"

THE SIMPLE LIFE—ON SIDEWALKS

April, 1906

A lady, dainty, young, and fair,
 Was cooking in the open air;
 She wore a sweater for a waist
 Her Easter hat her head begaced,
 Her husband — also with a hat,
 A silken tile,— demurely sat
 Coatless upon the curb, his feet
 Adorned the gutter of the street.
 Their stove was but a pile of bricks
 Flung down by recent chimney tricks
 Of taking headers through the air;

These were a honeymooning pair
And found first housekeeping no joke;
Her eyes were streaming with the smoke,
The while the sputtering ham she fried;
The chips he diligently plied
To flames that blew four ways at once;
He softly swore he was a dunce
Who never built a stove before;
“My love,” he cried, “it needs a door.”
And then a moment all went well,
While west winds had a lucid spell;
“Now hurry, Jack, while things are hot;
You take the pot
I’ve got the pans. There come patrols,
You’d best stamp out these burning coals.”
Then up the front steps they’d run,
Laughing as if such life were fun.
The life indoors was simpler still
And all day long a midnight chill
Wrapped her like hydropathic sheet;
She went outdoors to warm her feet;
No spark upon the hearthstone cheered,
For if a curl of smoke appeared,
A bayonet six feet long or more
Came flashing through the opened door.
And water was a luxury rare
To be conserved with greatest care,
For when Jack brought it from afar,
Where things escaped the recent jar,
To heat it for her selfish use
Were of his kindness and abuse.
The evenings were in simple life
Devoid of interesting strife.
If through the streets they took a turn,
Because indoors no lights could burn,
The omnipresent khakis said,
“’Tis time good folks were all in bed;”
The simple life at night was dark
For if escaped one little spark
From hidden candle after eight,
There came a rattling at the gate,—
“Put out that light!” a stern voice cried.
“All right,” he amiably replied.
(They thought to have a little game
And drew the curtains for the same.)
He tried to imitate the mouse,
But tumbled things about the house
Till echos rang, for every chair
Seemed placed just right to make him swear.

Against the door he bumped his head
 Then tumbled crossways into bed.
 It was a morning's task to find
 The garments he had cast behind.

You teachers try this simple life
 You call "devoid of nervous strife."
 See how you feel the soul's spent wings
 Flutter amid such simple things.
 See how the dross, by spirit fire
 Is sublimated from desire,—
 That lust for comfort of the flesh;
 Mark me, you'll know yourselves afresh.



More advanced housekeeping

This gleeful couple did their best
To jollify the long-drawn test,
But daily trial recognized
— By moonlight they philosophized —
That life somewhat more civilized
Was worth the burdens it disguised.



Making the best of it

THE SIMPLE LIFE—IN TENTS

Ten thousand khaki tents or more
The parks' green hillsides scattered o'er
To the idealist might seem
Idyllic as a shepherd's dream.
As landscape gardening, they're not bad;
Worse picnic places may be had;
As summer camps a month or more
One may endure the flapping door
And drafts that sweep across the floor;
The dust and odors in the clothes
To tent flaps pinned in swinging rows;
Wall shadows cast by careless lamps
Betraying secrets to the camps;
As habitations to endure
They should be studied for a cure.
The simple life in them pursued
Proves both disquieting and crude;
That which in art is picturesque,
For living proves a coarse burlesque.

THE SIMPLE LIFE—IN CLUBS

April, 1906

From various junketings with fate
Six club men sat in dreary state;
Millions they'd lost, each man a few,
A few were left to start anew.
"No hard luck stories, now, you boys"
(Each man was gray). "Let's tell our joys."
A deep voice growled, "My throat's so dry,
There's one old joy I'd like to try.
You see those tumblers upside down,
And not a lemon in the town?"
He groaned at such unnatural woe
Who'd seen unmoved his millions go.
One sufferer bounded from his seat,
Flew down the stairs as light and fleet
As wings of youth were on his feet.

For this hour saved from fire and shock,
An office stood upon the dock.
A man of venerable mien
Writing alone could there be seen;

And thither came our millionaire
Familiar and most debonair.

"Say, Mac, those fellows at the club!
You know they've had an awful rub."

Behind his spectacles' gold rim
Relaxed a bit, Max' visage grim;
Those words appealed right up to him.
The office door he gently locked,
His visitor seemed nothing shocked.
Respectable and quite correct
A safe stood there; who would suspect
That comfort, contraband, could hide
Within its little black inside?
From double depths all cool and dark
That host drew forth a glinting spark,
The which his eager guest received
As writ of life to the reprieved.
"Come here, you love," he softly cried,
"My coat's got loose enough to hide
"A dozen such. Let's take a ride."
Then forth upon the dock they walked,
These Innocents at home, and talked
With manners grave and dignified,
How life must be more simplified;
On reconstruction well discoursed,
That forces must be reinforced,
Until they reached the auto, where
The cops passed by with guileless air.
Mac whispered then, "Now speed that road
As if you had a red cross load."
What general or potentate
Triumphant from the field or state,
Could with this hero be compared,
This dear old swell who loved and dared?
And when he set that bottle down,
Those clubmen seized the Bourbon crown
As rebels often had before.
The hero was ordained to pour
Into each glass the precious store.
Reverent they watched the sacred rite,
Then held their crystals to the light,
And how they read its golden glow,
'Tis the elect alone can know.
They passed the nectar to and fro
Beneath each expert nostril's play —
Delicious test of its bouquet;

So lovers revel in delay.
And then a solemn moment fell —
Each glass was drained, its dainty well
A heaven, no futile pen may tell.

The cork they toasted to the cheer
And hung it on the chandelier;
Beribboned there it swings, the first
To break the record of the thirst.



*"The cork they toasted to the cheer
And hung it on the chandelier"*



Simple life in Bohemia



"That martyr ablaze he wiggwagged aloft"

THE REASON WHY

Up and down the face of Telegraph Hill
 While our city was swept by flames,
 An Italian tore, and he prayed and he swore,
 And he called all his saints by name.

When, deaf or afar, they answered him not,
 He dissolved into filial tears;
 In the red-black sky still the pyre blazed high
 Of the city he'd loved for years.

Then a sudden thought lit his swarthy face,
 "The Patron! St. Francis, the blest!"
 In relief from despair, he plunged down the long stair
 To his house with its relic chest.

Quoth he, as a banner of silk he unfurled,
 "This is Francis Assisi's hour;
A saint of such fame must defend his name,
 Our homes he must save by his power."

That banner he waved that Assisi might see
 But still the flames rolled on;
"O Francis! behold the folk and the gold!"
 But by morning the city was gone.

All night he had borne St. Francis on high
 From each point of that rampart-wall.
"What's the use of a saint!" with his blasphemous plaint
 He collapsed, Assisi and all.

Next day, quite limp from the shock to his faith,
 That banner he found where it lay
On a roof, with the face staring up in disgrace,
 Half buried in ashes of gray.

That face! "Tis Francis of Sales!" he cried:
 "O Mother of God!" he wailed;
"What's the patron about that he didn't watch out?
 Or in penance, perhaps, I have failed."

"O Francis Assisi! How did Sales get in?
 'Tis not he has the charge of our town;
How dare a saint rob a saint of his job
 And let all the houses burn down?"

He seized the staff of that banner defamed,
 As anger burst forth from despair;
"If this Frenchman likes fire he shall have his desire;
 San Francisco's fate let him share."

As a living coal dropped down at his feet
 To its sacrificial flame,
He touched the fold of that silk and gold,
 And he burned it, the face and the name.

That martyr ablaze he wigwagged aloft
 With jeers that were pious complaints;
For another's mistake, Sales dropped at the stake,
 As is often the habit of saints.

So that's why the City of Francis was burned;
 The wrong saint was called to defend.
If Assisi'd been there he'd have heard the wild prayer,
 And mayhap would have changed the end.

FRANCISCA GLORIOSA

A crown on her head and triumphant, Francisca shall mount to her seat;
Her sceptre, a shaft of the lightning, all enemies under her feet;
The ocean of oceans her conquest, the nations their tribute shall bring
To her ashes abloom like an Eden, the home of perpetual Spring.
And the Orient's stores of the ages and the northland's frozen gold,
Still red with the fires of Aurora, where it burnt on her altars of old,
Shall build her a house of such splendor that masters of progress shall own
Her a queen among cities, her prowess, that spirit sublimed which is known
To the souls that, like metal concentrate, have passed through the crucible's
test.

Then the world shall unite with her children to hail her, "Francisca the
Blest!"



Francisca Gloriosa



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